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United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

Report of the Second Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. José Alberto **Briz Gutiérrez** (Guatemala)

I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2003, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled "United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development" and to allocate it to the Second Committee.

2. The Second Committee considered the item at its 15th to 18th, 24th and 37th meetings, on 20, 21 and 22 October, 3 November and 11 December 2003. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/58/SR.15-18, 24 and 37). Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 2nd to 6th meetings, from 6 to 9 October (see A/C.2/58/SR.2-6).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it a letter dated 3 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final communiqué of the annual coordination meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, held at United Nations Headquarters on 26 September 2003 (A/58/415-S/2003/952).

4. At the 15th meeting, on 20 October, the Director of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Liaison Office to the United Nations made an oral presentation on behalf of the Director-General of UNESCO (see A/C.2/58/SR.15).

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II. Consideration of proposals

Draft resolutions A/C.2/58/L.13 and A/C.2/58/L.70

5. At the 24th meeting, on 3 November, the representative of Japan, on behalf of Andorra, Belarus, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Egypt, Gabon, Guatemala, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Panama, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uganda, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zimbabwe, introduced a draft resolution entitled "United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development" (A/C.2/58/L.13). Subsequently, Algeria, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Fiji, Iceland, Jamaica, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Malawi, the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, South Africa, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic, Timor-Leste, Ukraine and the United Republic of Tanzania joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* paragraph 124 (d) of the Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002 ('Johannesburg Plan of Implementation'),

"*Recalling also* its resolution 57/254 of 20 December 2002,

"*Reaffirming* the goals and the target year for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the Dakar Framework for Action,

"*Welcoming* the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development,

"*Emphasizing* that education is an indispensable element for achieving sustainable development,

"1. *Appreciates* the Framework for a Draft International Implementation Scheme prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, expects the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to continue to demonstrate its leadership for the promotion of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, and requests it to develop further a draft international implementation scheme, clarifying its relationship with the existing educational processes, in particular, the Dakar Framework for Action and the United Nations Literacy Decade, in consultation with the United Nations and other relevant international organizations, Governments, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders;

"2. *Reaffirms* that Education for Sustainable Development is an education necessary to tackle various issues regarding the question of sustainability, in particular, those of biological diversity, atmosphere, water, food, overpopulation, poverty, health, human rights, gender equality, peace-building and cultural diversity, with the aim of achieving sustainable development, and, based on this recognition, invites Governments to include measures conforming to their realities and needs to implement Education for Sustainable Development in their respective educational strategies and action

plans by 2005, taking into account the international implementation scheme to be prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

"3. *Recognizes* that sharing values necessary for achieving sustainable development among all citizens through the promotion of Education for Sustainable Development is of utmost importance, and therefore invites Governments to reinforce cooperation and networking with all relevant stakeholders including Governments, provincial regions, local communities, international organizations and non-governmental organizations;

"4. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-ninth session the item entitled 'United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development'."

6. At its 37th meeting, on 11 December, the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Irena Zubčević (Croatia), introduced a draft resolution entitled "United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development" (A/C.2/58/L.70), which she submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.13.

7. At the same meeting, the representative of Japan orally corrected the draft resolution.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.70 as orally corrected (see para. 10).

9. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.70, draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.13 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

10. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

The General Assembly,

Recalling chapter 36 of Agenda 21, on promoting education, public awareness and training, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992,[1]

Recalling also the relevant provisions of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation on education, in particular its provision 124 (d) on the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development,[2]

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[1] See *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janiero, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

Recalling further its resolution 57/254 of 20 December 2002,

Reaffirming the internationally agreed development goal of achieving universal primary education, in particular that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling,

Taking note of the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development,

Welcoming the fact that the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its eleventh session, identified education as one of the cross-cutting issues of its multi-year programme of work,

Emphasizing that education is an indispensable element for achieving sustainable development,

1. *Takes note* of the Framework for a Draft International Implementation Scheme prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, requests the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as the designated lead agency, to promote the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, in coordination with other relevant United Nations agencies and programmes, and further requests it to finalize the international implementation scheme, while clarifying its relationship with the existing educational processes, in particular the Dakar Framework for Action[3] and the United Nations Literacy Decade,[4] in consultation with Governments, the United Nations and other relevant international organizations, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders;

2. *Reaffirms* that education for sustainable development is critical for promoting sustainable development, and in this regard encourages Governments to consider the inclusion of measures to implement the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in their respective educational strategies and national development plans by 2005;

3. *Invites* Governments to promote public awareness of and wider participation in the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, including through cooperation and initiatives engaging civil society and other relevant stakeholders;

4. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-ninth session, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", a sub-item entitled "United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development".

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[3] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Final Report of the World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000* (Paris, 2000).

[4] See resolution 56/116.